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SURVEY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER AIDES, FALL 1965.
NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPT., ALBANY

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TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER, CHARACTERISTICS, AND ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY NONCERTIFIED PERSONNEL SERVING AS TEACHER AIDES IN NEW YORK SCHOOLS (EXCLUDING NEW YORK CITY), QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES FROM 629 OF THE 740 CHIEF SCHOOL OFFICERS IN THE STATE (85 PERCENT) WERE TALLIED. MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS REPORTED THE USE OF TEACHER AIDES. FROM AN 85 PERCENT RESPONSE TO A SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE SENT DIRECTLY TO THE 3,134 AIDES IDENTIFIED BY CHIEF SCHOOL OFFICERS, 98 PERCENT WERE WOMEN (MEDIAN AGE 42), EMPLOYED IN THE DISTRICT AS AIDES FOR A MEDIAN OF 3.5 YEARS, 89 PERCENT WORKED LESS THAN A 7-HOUR DAY. IN 91 PERCENT OF THE DISTRICTS, AIDES WERE SELECTED BY ADMINISTRATORS ALONE. THEIR ACTIVITIES INCLUDED NONINSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION, CLERICAL DUTIES, SUCH TECHNICAL HELP AS DRILLING AND STORY TELLING AND HOUSEKEEPING. A FEW DISTRICTS EMPLOYED LAY READERS, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AIDES, AND LABORATORY AIDES. AN OBVIOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND TYPE OF JOB WAS SHOWN. NINETY-THREE PERCENT OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS REPORTED FAVORABLE REACTIONS TO THE USE OF TEACHER AIDES. (CA)

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The University of the State of New York
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Survey of Public School Teacher Aides
Fall 1965

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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Survey of Public School Teacher Aides Fall 1965

One of the newer developments in public school administration is the employment of noncertified personnel assigned to relieve teachers of some of their duties not directly related to instruction in order to provide classroom teachers with more time for teaching.

Purpose

This is a report of the use of teacher aides in schools in New York State. The purpose of this study is to determine the general characteristics of teacher aides and to describe the kinds of activities they now perform. The data will be used as a basis for reviewing the regulations regarding the use of teacher aides and to advise schools on the most effective ways of using aides' services.

Source of Data

The data were collected on two forms, one completed by the chief school administrators and the other completed by the individual teacher aides. Copies of the forms appear at the end of this report.

All of the chief school administrators in the State (excluding New York City) were contacted. Eighty-five percent of the chief school administrators (57 cities, 157 villages, 415 schools in supervisory districts) responded to their question forms. When it was determined which districts were using aides and how many they were employing, the chief school officers were asked to distribute forms to be completed by the teacher aides. Eighty-five percent of the aides employed reported by the chief school administrators completed their questionnaires.

Extent of Use

Of the 629 chief school officers completing their question forms, 68 percent (428 districts) reported that they were using teacher aides.

Seventy percent of the cities, 71 percent of the villages and 67 percent of the schools in supervisory districts reported the use of teacher aide assistance.

The use of teacher aides is a recent development. Of the 428 responding districts now using aides, only ten have used them in excess of 10 years. Twenty-three are employing them for the first time in 1965-66. The median district has been using them 3.5 years. Cities and villages have a median of 3.5 years of use while schools in supervisory districts have a median of 3.6 years of use. Schools in supervisory districts have had a slightly longer experience with the use of aides than city and village districts.

Number of Aides

The 428 chief school administrators using aides' assistance reported 3,134 aides employed; 20 percent by city district, 39 percent by villages and 41 percent by schools in supervisory districts.

Sixty-five percent of the aides are working at the elementary school level, 28 percent at the secondary school level and 7 percent at both levels.

Selection of Aides

In 91 percent of the districts using aides' assistance, selection of aides was made by one or more members of the administrative staff. In only 6 percent of the districts do the administrative and instructional staffs cooperate on the selection of teacher aides. In 3 percent of the districts boards of education select the aides.

While administrators select the aides in most cases, professional personnel recommend candidates for employment in 71 percent of the districts employing aides. Boards of education recommend candidates for employment in 21 percent of the districts. Three percent of the districts mentioned friends, other aides, cafeteria managers, and neighborhood organizations as other groups recommending candidates for employment.

A number of districts mentioned that they advertise in the newspapers for candidates.

Duties

The chief school administrators reported the general categories of duties performed by their aides. Ninety-three percent (399 of the 428 administrators using aides' assistance) reported duties in the area of noninstructional supervision;¹ 52 percent reported duties of a clerical nature; 28 percent reported duties in the category of technical helps;² 20 percent reported duties of a housekeeping nature;³ 6 percent reported using lay readers; 3 percent reported aides in charge of instructional materials; 2 percent reported laboratory aides.

Eighty-five percent (2,654) of the aides employed reported by the 428 chief school administrators completed their question forms. The replies from aides represent 87 percent of the 428 districts using aides' assistance.

Table 1 presents the type of job performed by the 2,654 teacher aides. The job assignments of 75 percent of the aides are in the areas of noninstructional supervisory and clerical duties. Slightly over half of the aides work only in the area of noninstructional supervision while 6 percent perform clerical duties only. Seventeen percent are general classroom aides,⁴ of whom 96 percent are working at the elementary school level. Eight percent are library aides, lay readers, instructional materials aides, and laboratory assistants.

¹Cafeteria, playground, study hall, recess, bus, etc.

²Drill, helping with a reading group, helping with an art period, reading stories, telling stories, etc.

³Room cleanup, bulletin board care, ventilation, lights, etc.

⁴Classroom aide is a term used for the convenience of this report. This group all reported duties in the area of technical helps with additional duties in one or more of the three areas: clerical, noninstructional supervision, and housekeeping duties.

Table 1
Type of Job

Type of job	Number of aides	Percent
Noninstructional supervision only	1,430	54
Classroom aide**	455	17
Noninstructional supervision and clerical	385	15
Clerical only	167	6
Library aide	155	5
Lay reader	40	2
Instructional materials aide	14	1
Laboratory aide	8	*
Total	2,654	100

*Less than 0.5.

**All 455 reported duties in the area of technical helps with additional duties in one or more of the three areas: clerical, noninstructional supervision and housekeeping duties.

General Qualifications Required

Twenty-eight percent of the districts employing aides (9 cities, 30 villages, 79 schools in supervisory districts) reported that they have no formal qualifications required for employment as a teacher aide but that they do take into consideration the educational background, special skills, prior work experience, personal appearance, level of maturity and culture, and other personal factors. The remaining districts (72 percent) reported one or more of five requirements: age, sex, education, special skills, and prior work experience.

Age. Eighty-five districts (20 percent of the districts employing aides) reported age as a requirement. Eighty percent of these districts specified someone over 21 years of age with a few districts wanting middle-age people; nine districts mentioned over age 18 as a requirement.

Sex. Fifty-six districts (13 percent of the districts employing aides) reported that they required women for the aide positions. Three districts mentioned that they use men at the secondary level and women at the elementary level. Because of the nature of some of the aide jobs, administrators look for mothers with children.

Education. One hundred ninety-two districts (45 percent of the districts employing aides) reported an educational requirement for the aide positions. All but two of these districts require high school graduation with 47 districts requiring some college or a bachelor's degree for certain jobs; two districts mentioned less than high school graduation as a minimum.

Special skills. One hundred sixty-two districts (38 percent of the districts employing aides) reported that they required special skills for employment as a teacher aide. The ability to handle children was mentioned by 61 districts. Fifty-three districts reported typing as a skill required for the aide work.

Prior work experience. Seventy districts (17 percent of the districts employing aides) reported prior work experience as a requirement for a teacher aide. Previous experience working with children and with other adults was stressed by these districts.

Qualifications of Aides Employed

Age and sex. The median age of teacher aides is 42. Ninety-eight percent of the aides are women.

Education. Table 2 presents the percentage distribution of educational qualifications of aides by type of job. There is an obvious relationship between the educational level and the type of job performed by aides. Almost three-fifths of those engaged mainly in noninstructional supervisory assignments have no more than a high school education while one-fifth of this group did not graduate from high school. Nearly half of the clerical, classroom and library aides have no more than a high school education and almost half have had college level training. The majority of the lay readers, instructional materials aides, and laboratory assistants have had college level training.

Table 2

Percentage Distribution of Educational Qualifications of Aides
by Type of Job

Type of job	Educational level				Total percent
	Less than high sch. graduation	High school graduation	Less than 4 years of college	4 years of college or more	
Noninstructional supervision only	22	58	16	4	100
Noninstructional supervision and clerical	7	55	31	7	100
Clerical only	2	48	40	10	100
Classroom aide	10	47	31	12	100
Library aide	3	45	36	16	100
Lay reader			2	98	100
Instructional materials aide		14	43	43	100
Laboratory aide		12	13	75	100
Total	15	53	23	9	100

Other Qualifications

Ninety-five percent of the aides have children of their own. Ninety-seven percent have had previous experience with other children such as baby-sitting, teaching Sunday school, and counseling in camp. Ninety-eight percent of the aides had some type of previous work experience. Eighty percent of the aides have some special talent. Their talents include skills in music and art, and homemaking and secretarial skills.

Working Conditions

Hours worked per day. Table 3 presents the hours worked per day by type of job. Aide positions quite generally offer only part-time employment. About 90 percent of the aides engaged mainly in noninstructional supervisory duties and lay readers work less than 3 hours per day. Slightly over 60 percent of clerical, library, and classroom aides work from 3 to 7 hours per day. The majority of laboratory aides and instructional materials aides work 7 hours or more per day.

Hourly pay. Table 4 presents the median hourly pay of teacher aides by type of job.

The chief school officers reported that the salary paid teacher aides varies according to the job assignment. This fact is revealed in Table 5 which is based on the rate of pay reported by teacher aides. The median hourly pay ranges from \$1.59 to \$2.56.

The lowest paid aides are those engaged mainly in noninstructional supervisory duties. The highest paid aides are laboratory and instructional materials aides and lay readers.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of Hours Worked Per Day
by Type of Aide Job

Type of job	Hours per day				Total percent
	1-2.9	3-4.9	5-6.9	7 and over	
Noninstructional supervision only	86	10	2	2	100
Noninstructional supervision and clerical	20	33	27	20	100
Classroom aide	19	36	26	19	100
Clerical only	12	36	26	26	100
Lay reader	93	5	2		100
Laboratory aide		25	12	63	100
Instructional materials aide	7	7	7	79	100
Library aide	14	30	27	29	100
Total	55	21	13	11	100

Table 4

Median Hourly Pay by Type of Job

Type of job	Median hourly pay
Noninstructional supervision only	\$1.62 ^a
Noninstructional supervision and clerical	1.59
Classroom aide	1.71
Clerical only	1.67
Lay readers	2.33
Laboratory aide	2.56
Instructional materials aide	2.50
Library aide	1.89
Total	\$1.66

^aThe median of this group is somewhat higher than the group following because study hall aides are included in this figure.

Civil Service Status

Three percent of the teacher aides employed in 6 percent of the districts reported that they were appointed from a Civil Service list. The Civil Service classifications include School Monitor, School Aide, Clerk-Typist, Typist, Clerk, and Stenographer.

Reaction to the Use of Teacher Aides

The chief school officers were asked to give their reaction to the use of teacher aides. Ninety-three percent of the administrators found their experience with teacher aides to be favorable. One supervising principal said, "Very favorable. We don't know how we managed without them in past years!"

Another principal said, "In a rural school, where money is tight, school days long, and teaching loads heavy, this system is an absolute essential!"

Another principal commented, "If my budget would allow it, I'd have two more teacher aides in this school. Definitely useful and definitely valuable."

A principal in southern New York noted that "anyone who attempts to operate without them is missing the boat."

However, 26 administrators reported neutral attitudes and four had unfavorable reactions. It was felt by some of these administrators that teacher aides do not control students as well as regular teachers. One administrator said that he did not always find "their (teacher aides) lay judgment and common sense to be the best in supervising this kind of activity (cafeteria supervision)."

The chief school officers were also asked to give their staffs' reaction to the use of teacher aides. Ninety-three percent of the administrators reported their staffs' reaction to be favorable; 26 administrators reported their staffs' reaction to be neutral and 2 administrators reported their staffs' reaction as

unfavorable. In one school district the teachers felt that the quality of cafeteria supervision under teacher aide supervision had an unfavorable influence on the school tone.

Discontinuance of Aide Programs

Thirty-one administrators not presently using teacher aides reported that their districts had teacher aide programs in the past and had eliminated them. Nine of these districts eliminated the programs prior to 1960 and 22 districts eliminated their programs between 1960 and 1965. In 22 of these districts a change in school organization was said to make the continued use of aides unnecessary; in three districts a budget problem caused the dropping of the programs; in six districts the aide programs were found to be unsatisfactory. Table 5 presents these data in detail.

Table 5

Districts Not Using Teacher Aides Presently but
Who Used Them in the Past

Type of district	Number	When eliminated		Reason for eliminating		
		Prior to 1960	1960-1965	Change in school organization*	Financial problem	Aide program unsatisfactory
City	1		1	1		
Village	5	1	4	1	2	2
Supervisory district	25	8	17	20	1	4
Total	31	9	22	22	3	6

* Large classes eliminated, new building, double session, etc.

Summary

This survey was conducted to gain information about teacher aides in New York State schools: the number employed, their characteristics and conditions of employment. The information was sought by questionnaire from all school districts except New York City. Responses were received from 629 districts, 85 percent of the districts questioned. Of these, 428 districts (68 percent) were currently employing aides in their districts. The number of aides employed in 1965-66, in this sample of schools, was 3,134.

The use of teacher aides is a recent and rapidly growing movement. Of the districts now employing aides, only ten have had them in excess of ten years. Twenty-three are employing them for the first time in the current (1965-66) school year. The median district has been using aide service 3.5 years.

Aides are employed for a wide variety of activities, from the completely mechanical activities of housekeeping and clerical work to such higher level activities of those of the laboratory aide or the theme reader. Seventy-five percent of the aides perform duties only of a noninstructional supervisory and/or clerical nature. Educational requirements for employment varies with the kind of activity for which the aide is employed from no specified requirement to some college education. Most schools ask that aides who are to have a direct relationship with children be mature, and have had experience in dealing with children.

The aide is essentially a part-time employee. Fifty-five percent of them work less than three hours a day. Only eleven percent work seven or more hours a day. Their pay varies with the kind of responsibility. Non-instructional supervisory aides are paid an average of about \$1.60 per hour, laboratory aides an average in excess of \$2.50. The median hourly pay for all aides was \$1.66.

The overwhelming majority of administrators and teachers attest to the value of aide service. The only dissenting opinion is apparently where untrained aides have been given heavy noninstructional supervisory responsibility, as lunchroom supervision.

Appendix

The specific duties listed under the categories of aide jobs reported as closely as possible in the words of the teacher aides. This report in no way attempts to evaluate or challenge the validity of the duties of aides.

CLERICAL DUTIES

Enter marks on report cards

Take roll call

Write on blackboard

Operate mimeograph

Type stencils, letters, etc.

Keep attendance records

Act as receptionist

Keep health records

Send for pamphlets

Assist guidance counselors with records

Sell ice cream

Sell lunch tickets

Take collections

Take charge of banking

Check workbooks

Keep lunch and milk money records

Inventory supplies

Compute averages

Make seating charts

Work on data processing of standard tests

Do the statistical work with standard tests

Work with IBM attendance material

Issue passes

Make posters

CLERICAL DUTIES (continued)

Do the filing

Sort and answer mail

Enroll new students

Do errands for teacher

Staple educational material

Cut paper

Contact parents, take ill children home

Operate office machines

Answer telephone

Answer intercom

Collate materials

Arrange class trips

Inventory books

Stamp, label and distribute new books

Take care of first aid supplies

Keep picture file

Schedule appointments

Score standard tests

Record test results

Prepare phonic cards and worksheets for lessons

Operate duplicating machines

Operate film projector, tape recorder

Complete accident reports

Compile absence lists

Prepare forms for transfers

Post notes on anecdotal records

NONINSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION

Hall duty
Recess
Lunch
Study hall
Bus duty
Detention
Lavatories and showers
Breakfast program
Crossings
Examinations
Rest period
Trips
Extra-curricular activities
Movies
Television receiving

HOUSEKEEPING DUTIES

Take care of ventilation and lights
Take care of bulletin board
Clean up room
Prepare snacks
Take care of plants
Clean paint brushes
Mix paint
Wash towels for gym use
Put cots up and down for nap
Wash dishes

HOUSEKEEPING DUTIES (Continued)

Fill paste jars
Clean easels
Clean science area
Take care of supply room
Prepare rooms for meetings
Check lockers
Help with outer clothing
Zipper coats
Put on boots
Tie hoods
Give first-aid

TECHNICAL HELPS

Read stories
Tell stories
Drill
Help with art period
Relieve teacher in emergency
Lead group singing
Play games
Play records - music appreciation
Read poetry
Help with mathematics period
Help with social studies period
Give spelling words
Help with reading groups
Help with language groups

TECHNICAL HELPS (Continued)

Help with kindergarten program
Help with home economics program
Conduct show and tell
Help with science projects
Help with workbooks
Play piano
Help with finger painting
Teach children left and right
Teach children to tie
Teach children to use scissors

LIBRARY AIDES

Typing cards, letters, etc.
File catalog cards
Prepare orders for books
Process books
Do shelving
Take care of circulation
Repair books
Classify books
Inventory library materials
Compile reports
Do reference work
Keep daily records of books borrowed
Open and sort mail
Check magazine arrivals
File magazines

LIBRARY AIDES (Continued)

Check books received against orders

Help children find books

Card books

Write overdue notices

Make up packets of books for primary grades and circulate

LAY READERS

Correct English compositions

Correct mathematics papers

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AIDES

Take complete charge of audio-visual center

Process all filmstrips

Book all films

Supervise audio-visual corps students

Operate all audio-visual equipment

Inventory materials

Order materials

Circulate equipment

LABORATORY AIDES

Check laboratory clean-up

Check laboratory equipment

Prepare chemicals and solutions

Supervise laboratory

Grade experiments

Maintain efficient laboratory and stock control

Set up demonstrations

Run off ditto copies

Repair equipment

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Albany, New York 12224

SURVEY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER AIDES, FALL 1965

Chief School Administrator _____

School District _____ County _____

Please check or fill in the answers to the following questions concerning the teacher aide program in your school district. Include only paid persons assigned to relieve teachers of some of their duties.

1. Are you at the present time using any form of teacher aide assistance in your school district?

(1) Yes _____
(2) No _____

2. If you are NOT using any form of teacher aide at the present time, did your school district ever use teacher aides?

(1) Yes _____
(2) No _____

3. If your answer to question #2 was YES, what was the last year aides were employed?

Year _____

4. If your reply to question #2 was YES, why did your school district eliminate teacher aides?

If you are using teacher aides presently in your school district, please fill in or check the following questions as they relate to the use of teacher aides.

5. How long has your district been using teacher aides?

Number of years _____

Over

6. Number of aides presently employed:

Elementary level only	_____
Secondary level only	_____
Both levels	_____
Total	_____

7. Teacher aides are selected by:

Chief school administrator	(1) _____
Other administrative staff	(2) _____
Instructional staff	(3) _____
Other	(4) _____

8. Who recommends candidates?

Professional personnel	(1) _____
P.T.A. Members	(2) _____
Board members	(3) _____
Other	(4) _____

9. Salary paid teacher aides:

(Fill in the amount for the
rates at which your district
pays teacher aides)

Hourly rate	\$ _____
Daily rate	_____
Weekly rate	_____
Yearly rate	_____
Other	_____

10. Duties of a teacher aide:

(Please attach a copy of the formal job description for teacher aides,
if available)

Check the general categories below performed by your teacher aides and
add any other not covered by these general areas.

Clerical (report cards, roll call, etc.)	(1) _____
Noninstructional supervision (hall duty, recess, etc.)	(2) _____
Housekeeping (ventilation, lights, etc.)	(3) _____
Technical help (read stories, drill, etc.)	(4) _____
Other (describe)	(5) _____

11. General qualifications required for employment as a teacher aide:

Check the items in the following table for which you have a requirement for employment as a teacher aide. Add any items not covered by the list and fill in the last column with the specific requirement.

Item	Is there a requirement? Answer yes or no		If yes, what is the requirement?
	Yes	No	
Age			
Sex			
Education			
Special Skills			
Prior Work Experience			
Other			

Comments: _____

12. What has been your reaction to the use of teacher aides?

(1)Favorable _____
 (2)Unfavorable _____
 (3)Neutral _____

Comments: _____

Over

13. What has been your staff's reaction to the use of teacher aides?

(1)Favorable _____
(2)Unfavorable _____
(3)Neutral _____

Comments: _____

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Please fill in the following questions with the proper information or check the appropriate answers as they pertain to you as a person or to your position of teacher aide.

Name _____

School District _____ County _____

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|----|------------------------|
| 1. | Sex | 2. | Age |
| | (1) Male _____ | | (1) Less than 20 _____ |
| | (2) Female _____ | | (2) 20 - 29 _____ |
| | | | (3) 30 - 39 _____ |
| | | | (4) 40 - 49 _____ |
| | | | (5) 50 and over _____ |

3. Education
- (1) Less than high school graduation _____
 - (2) High school graduation _____
 - (3) Less than 4 years of college _____
 - (4) Four years or more of college _____

4. Do you have children of your own?
- (1) Yes _____
 - (2) No _____

5. Experience with children (other than your own)

- (1) Baby sitting _____
 - (2) Teach Sunday School _____
 - (3) Camp counselor _____
 - (4) Other _____
- _____
- _____

6. Previous work experience

- (1) Office or sales _____
 - (2) Child care _____
 - (3) Other _____
- _____
- _____

7. Special talents

- (1) Music _____
- (2) Art _____
- (3) Homemaking skills _____
- (4) Secretarial skills _____
- (5) Other _____

8. Rate of pay

(Fill in the
amount for the
one rate at which
you are paid)

Hourly rate _____
Daily rate _____
Weekly rate _____
Yearly rate _____
Other _____

9. Hours worked

Hours worked per day _____

10. Teacher aide work level

- (1) Elementary school _____
- (2) Secondary school _____
- (3) Both levels _____

11. Were you selected from a Civil Service list?

- (1) Yes _____
- (2) No _____

If yes, what is your classification? _____

12. Duties

Check the following categories of duties which apply to your work as a teacher aide. Under each category check the specific duties you perform. Add all other duties not included in the list which you perform.

CLERICAL

Report cards _____
Roll Call _____
Write on blackboard _____
Operate Mimeograph _____

Over

NONINSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION

Hall duty
Recess
Lunch
Morning exercises

HOUSEKEEPING

Ventilation
Lights
Bulletin board care
Room cleanup

TECHNICAL HELPS

Read stories
Tell stories
Drill
Help with Art Period

OTHER

